



WAR of KINGS™

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MARVEL
LIMITED SERIES
4 of 6

DIRECT EDITION

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\$3.99 US

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WAR of KINGS

A devastating galactic war has broken out between the Kree Empire, ruled by Black Bolt and the Inhuman royal family, and the Shi'Ar Imperium, controlled by the despotic mutant Vulcan.

Vulcan saw an opportunity to annex the Kree Empire while it was in a state of upheaval. During the symbolic wedding of the Inhuman princess Crystal and Ronan the Accuser, Vulcan unleashed his Imperial Guard in a callous first strike, sending his war fleets to invade Kree space.

Reeling from this savage attack, in which many Kree colony worlds were annihilated by nega-bombs, the Inhumans realized they had to overcome the Shi'Ar before any of their own schemes of destiny could be achieved.

The tides of war shifted dramatically when a rescue mission to save Lilandra, the exiled Shi'Ar empress, ended with Gladiator, praetor of the Imperial Guard, betraying his allegiance to Vulcan.

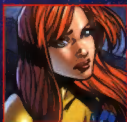
Now there is a deadlock. The Inhumans are trapped in a war they did not want to fight, and Vulcan finds himself committed to a campaign he may not be able to afford...



BLACK BOLT



MEDUSA



CRYSTAL



GORGON



KARNAK



TRITON



MAXIMUS



RONAN



LILANDRA



GLADIATOR



VULCAN

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SURELY YOU'RE
EXAGGERATING,
ADMIRAL KA'ARDUM. THE
SHI'AR IMPERIUM?
OVERSTRETCHED?

NOT YET,
EMPEROR VULCAN.
NOT TODAY. BUT AT THIS
RATE, WITHIN A FEW
MONTHS, A YEAR
AT MOST.

MY L-LORD...
UHM...YOU SHOULD
PROBABLY REMOVE
YOURSELF FROM
THIS LOCA--

QUIET!
ADULTS
ARE
TALKING.



THE IMPERIUM IS PRESENTLY
ENGAGED IN **NINETY-SEVEN**
SEPARATE CAMPAIGNS OF
PACIFICATION OR
ANNEXATION.

SO INCREASE PRODUCTION IN THE
SHIPYARDS AND ARSENALS! IT'S NOT
COMPLICATED! FOR GOD'S
SAKE, DOESN'T ANYBODY OWN
A WHIP ANYMORE?

WE HAVE
ALREADY BEEN
OBLIGED TO DOWN-
SCALE SIXTEEN OF THEM
IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN
THE SUPPLY OF MEN AND
MUNITIONS TO THE KREE
WARFRONTS.



MY L-LORD,
YOU REALLY
SHOULD B--

HUSH!

THERE ARE REPORTS
OF UNREST IN THE
LABOR POOLS OF MOST
MANUFACTURING WORLDS,
MAJESTOR.

FURTHERMORE,
SEVERAL OUTWORLDS
HAVE NOW RISEN IN
REVOLT AT THE SCALE
OF THE TAXES WE ARE
DEMANDING OF THEM.

THE SHEER
INTENSITY OF
THIS WAR WITH THE
KREE IS **EXHAUSTING**
OUR MILITARY
RESOURCES, MY
EMPEROR.

IT IS
BEGINNING TO
SAP THE **SPIRIT**
OF THE SHI'AR.



DO YOU
CONCUR WITH
THE ADMIRAL'S
ASSESSMENT,
CHANCELLOR
ARAKI?

--TZZBBBZ--

--TZZBZBK--

WHAT'S
WRONG WITH THE
INTELFEEED?

COMMUNICATIONS
HAVE BEEN IMPAIRED BY
THE AFTEREFFECTS OF
NEGA-BOMBING.

I **URGE**
YOU TO
RETURN TO
THE FLAGSHIP,
MY LORD!



WHAT?
AND MISS THIS
BRACING
WALK IN THE
COUNTRY?

SHARRA GROUND ASSAULT
OF THE KREE HEARTWORLD
KON-SHAR



PERHAPS
WE SHOULD
NEGOTIATE A
CEASE-FIRE WITH
THE KREE.

THAT
SOUNDS AN
AWFUL LOT LIKE
TREASON.
ADMIRAL, I--

SHARRA
AND
KYTHRI!

A SENTRY! A
SENTRY HAS GOT
THROUGH THE
DEFENSE
BARRAGE!



KREEESH

IT'S
BREACHED
THE SHIELDS!
IT'S--



AAAAAEEEEEE--

IMPERIAL
GUARD! PROTECT
THE MAJESTY!

MUST I DO
EVERYTHING
MYSELF--

THE SHI'AR
MAJESTOR IS
UNDER MY
PROTECTION.

INDEED,
AND WHO
MIGHT YOU
BE?

FTTOOMFF



THE SHORES OF THE SARETH OCEAN, HALA.

--AND SO I
THOUGHT THE SEA
AIR MIGHT AID YOUR
CONVALESCENCE.

YOU'VE BEEN
STARING AT THE
SAME HOSPITAL WALLS
FOR **TOO LONG**. A
CHANGE OF SCENERY
WILL IMPROVE YOUR
CONSTITUTION,
ACCUSER.

BESIDES, IT'S
THE **LEAST** A WIFE
CAN DO FOR HER
HUSBAND.

WIFE.
HMM...

I CONFESS
I AM STILL
COMING TO GRIPS
WITH THAT
CONCEPT.

YOU KNOW,
LADY CRYSTAL, BY
RIGHTS, THE SHI'AR SHOULD
HAVE **CRUSHED** US ALREADY.
THEIR IMPERIUM HAS **NEVER**
BEEN SO STRONG,
NOR OUR EMPIRE
SO **WEAK**.

IT IS A
TESTAMENT TO
THE LEADERSHIP OF
ATILAN AND THE
POWER OF THE **NEW**
INHUMAN ELITE THAT
WE ARE HOLDING
OUR OWN.

IT'S MORE
THAN THAT. MY
COUSIN KARNAK TELLS
ME THE SHI'AR ARE IN
DANGER OF **OVER-
STRETCH**.

DESPITE
THEIR **VAST**
RESOURCES, VULCAN'S
PROGRAM OF
EXPANSION HAS
DRAINED THEM.

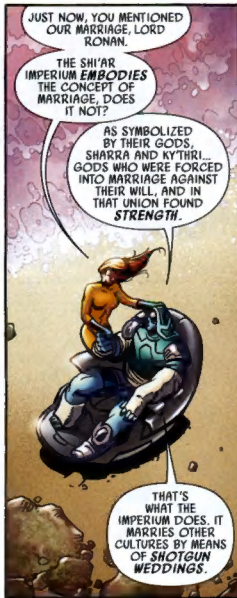
SO WE
ARE JUST A
STUBBORN ADVERSARY
WHO HAS APPEARED
AT THE **LEAST**
OPPORTUNE
MOMENT.



THE AVERAGE SHI'AR SOLDIER FIGHTS THIS WAR BECAUSE HE'S BEEN **ORDERED** TO, AND BECAUSE HE'S **AFRAID** OF VULCAN.

THE AVERAGE **KREE** SOLDIER FIGHTS BECAUSE HE REMEMBERS WHAT THE SHI'AR INFLICTED ON US IN THE **LAST** CONFLICT.

IN ANY WAR, I'D ALWAYS BACK THE SIDE THAT'S FIGHTING WITH **SPIRIT**.

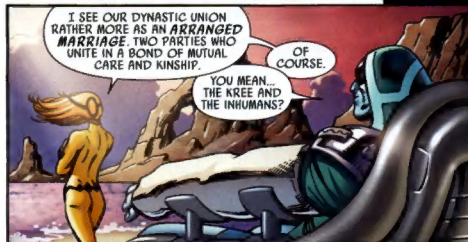


JUST NOW, YOU MENTIONED OUR MARRIAGE, LORD RONAN.

THE SHI'AR IMPERIUM **EMBODIES** THE CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE, DOES IT NOT?

AS SYMBOLIZED BY THEIR GODS, SHARRA AND KYTHRI... GODS WHO WERE FORCED INTO MARRIAGE AGAINST THEIR WILL, AND IN THAT UNION FOUND **STRENGTH**.

THAT'S WHAT THE IMPERIUM DOES. IT MARRIES OTHER CULTURES BY MEANS OF **SHOTGUN WEDDINGS**.



I SEE OUR DYNASTIC UNION RATHER MORE AS AN **ARRANGED MARRIAGE**. TWO PARTIES WHO UNITE IN A BOND OF MUTUAL CARE AND KINSHIP.

OF COURSE.

YOU MEAN... THE KREE AND THE INHUMANS?



AH, YES... THAT IS ALSO HOW I SEE IT.

THEN I NEED TO TELL YOU SOMETHING, ACCUSER, BECAUSE A GOOD MARRIAGE IS BUILT ON **HONESTY**.

THE PROGRAM TO UPLIFT THE KREE IS **NOT** WORKING. THE SCIENCE CASTES OF ATTILAN HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO MAKE GOOD ON BLACK BOLT'S PROMISE TO **JUMP-START** THE EVOLUTION OF YOUR SPECIES.



I BELIEVE THAT YOU AND I SHOULD STAND TOGETHER AND APPROACH BLACK BOLT ON THIS ISSUE WITH ALL URGENCY.

IF WE WAIT UNTIL THIS WAR IS DONE, IT MAY BE **FAR** TOO LATE, AND THE KREE WILL HAVE BEEN LEFT BEHIND.



AGREED.

BUT
OF THE WAR,
ONE THING
PUZZLES
ME...

FROM THE
REPORTS IT SEEMS
TO ME THERE HAVE BEEN
SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES
WHERE WE MIGHT HAVE
CAPITALIZED UPON
SMALL VICTORIES
AGAINST
THE SHI'AR.

MOMENTS
WHERE WE MIGHT
HAVE TURNED MODEST
SUCCESSSES INTO
SOMETHING MORE
SUBSTANTIAL.



IT SEEMS
THAT OUR KING,
BLACK BOLT, IS HOLDING
BACK FROM TAKING THE
MOST RUTHLESS AND
DECISIVE
ACTIONS.



THE ACTIONS YOU SPEAK OF ARE **RUTHLESS**
INDEED. NO MATTER THEIR SUCCESS,
THEY WOULD HAVE COST THE KREE AND
THE INHUMANS IN **BLOOD**.

BLACK BOLT
WANTS THIS WAR ENDED
WITH A **MINIMUM** OF SUFFERING.
I BELIEVE HE IS WAITING TO SEE IF
THE **STARJAMMERS** CAN
COMPLETE THEIR MISSION
SUCCESSFULLY.

HE
TRUSTS THOSE
BRIGANDS?

THOSE
"BRIGANDS" ARE
HEROES, AND
THEY MAY JUST UNSEAT
VULCAN AND **END** THIS
WAR WITH FAR **LESS**
LOSS OF LIFE.



AND
IF THEY
FAIL?

I BELIEVE
THERE IS A
CONTINGENCY
PLAN.

AND WHAT
DOES THIS
CONTINGENCY
PLAN **CONSIST**
OF?



THE
KING HAS
NOT SAID.

BUT GIVEN
THE FURY OF THIS
WAR, I CANNOT
IMAGINE IT WILL
BE **Pretty**.

CHANDILAR, THE SHI'AR THRONEWORLD.

FOR ALL MY POWER,
I AM IN AWE OF
THE INFLUENCE THE
EMPRESS WIELDS.

ONE WORD FROM HER,
ONE *SPARK*, AND THE
FIRE SPREADS THROUGH
THE OLD, DRY TINDER
OF THE IMPERIUM.

THROUGH THE POPULATIONS
VULCAN HAS *OPPRESSED*
DURING HIS RULE, THROUGH THE
FIEFDOMS AND NOBLE HOUSES
HE HAS *DISPOSSESSED*
OR *SILENCED*.

THROUGH THOSE DIVISIONS
OF THE SHI'AR MILITARY HE
HAS *SQUANDERED* IN HIS
WARS OF EXPANSION OR
SIMPLY USED *TOO HARD*.

THROUGH THE GREAT
UNDERGROUND NETWORK
OF DISSENTERS WHO HAVE
RISKED EXECUTION BY KEEPING
THE NAME *LILANDRA*
NERAMANI ALIVE.

THE FIRE SPREADS
FAST, AND BURNS
BRIGHT.

IT BURNS IN
THE FORM OF
DISCONTENT, OF
SECRET *SABOTAGE*
TO THE IMPERIAL
INTELFED NETWORK,
OF *OPEN REVOLT*
ON *FOUNDRY*
WORLDS.

AND IT BURNS
HERE IN THE
AERIE TONIGHT.

WHO GOES
THERE?

THE
FUTURE.

PRAETOR!
IT IS A BLESSING
TO SEE YOU!

I CANNOT
CLAIM THAT
TITLE ANYMORE,
COUNCILLOR
D'BOK.

IT WILL
BE AWARDED TO
YOU AGAIN, SOON
ENOUGH, OF THAT I
AM CERTAIN!

COUNCILLOR D'BOK'S SEQUENCE
REMAINED LOYAL TO LILANDRA
WHEN THE INFLUENTIAL *ARAKI*
SEQUENCE SWUNG THE COUNCIL'S
SUPPORT TO VULCAN.

WAS YOUR
ROUTE TO THE
THRONEWORLD
CONTESTED?

WE
MANAGED.

WITH THE HELP OF THE
STARJAMMERS AND THE
GUARDIANS OF THE
GALAXY WE RAN HOODED
UNDER THE EYES OF VULCAN'S
FLEETS. WE FOUGHT WHEN
WE HAD TO.

NOW THE GUARDIANS
HAVE DEPARTED, AND I
AM LEFT WITH THE
STARJAMMERS TO WALK
HER THE LAST, LITTLE WAY.

IS EVERYTHING
PREPARED?

THE HIGH
COUNCIL IS IN
SESSION...

"AND CHANCELLOR ARAKI
BELIEVES THEY HAVE BEEN
CALLED FOR AN
EXTRAORDINARY
PARLIAMENT TO DISCUSS
MILITARY POLICY."

WHEN HAS
THIS HOUSE EVER
SHIED AWAY FROM
THE VICISSITUDES
OF WAR?

THE KREE
STELLAR EMPIRE
IS AN AGE-OLD FOE
THAT **MUST** BE
PUT DOWN!

THE LOSSES ARE TOO DEAR,
CHANCELLOR! EVEN THE KREE
CEDED TERRITORIES
HAVE TURNED
AGAINST US!

AYE! BY
GOING AGAINST THE
KREE IN THIS HEADLONG
MANNER, VULCAN HAS MADE
AN OPEN ENEMY OF LORD
RAVENOUS!

PAH! THE IMPERIUM
CONQUERS PETTY
KINGDOMS LIKE
RAVENOUS'S IN
ITS SLEEP!

FOR SHAME,
CHANCELLOR
ARAKI. WOULD
YOU SPILL SHI'AR
BLOOD SO
FREELY?

WHO
ADDRESSES
THIS HOUSE?
**SHOW
YOURSELF!**





YOUR
PERNICIOUS
SECRET ORDER
HAS MANIPULATED THE
FATE OF THE IMPERIUM
FOR TOO LONG,
ARAKI.

THIS IS
A COUP! WHEN
VULCAN LEARNS
OF THIS HE WILL
SLAUGHTER
YOU ALL! HE
WILL--

THIS IS NO
COUP! THIS IS
A RESTORATION
OF LEGAL
AUTHORITY!

I AM
LILANDRA
NERAMANI, MAJESTRIX
OF THE SHI'ARI. I RECLAIM
THE THRONE OF THE AERIE BY
RIGHT OF MY BLOOD
SEQUENCE!

MY FIRST
ACTS WILL BE TO
OUTLAW THE USURPER
VULCAN AND END THIS
DISASTROUS WAR
WITH THE KREE!

WHAT SAYS
THE HIGH
COUNCIL?!

MA-JES-TRIX!
MA-JES-TRIX!
MA-JES-TRIX!



START
AT THE TOP
AND KEEP IT
SIMPLE.

I AM
SHIR YDRN
TALONIS OF
THE FRATERNITY
OF RAPTORS. I
AM ALSO KNOWN
AS TALON.

AND THIS
FRATERNITY,
TALON, IT'S
SOME KIND OF
WARRIORS'
LODGE?

IT IS ■
ANCIENT ORDER,
FOUNDED WHEN THE
GALAXY WAS YOUNG.
IT HAS A SINGLE DUTY--
TO PROTECT AND
DIRECT THE GREAT
PURPOSE.



AND WHAT
WOULD THAT
"GREAT PURPOSE"
BE?

THE SHI'AR
IMPERIUM,
MAJESTOR.

WE WERE
CREATED TO KEEP
THE IMPERIUM
STRONG...

...TO ■■■
SURE IT ENDURES
FOREVER.



AS EMPEROR
I WOULD HAVE
THOUGHT I MIGHT
HAVE HEARD
OF YOU.

WE WERE
ONCE THE BYWORD
FOR AUTHORITY AND
DISCIPLINE, SERVING THE
MAJESTORS OF THE
YOUNG IMPERIUM.

BUT TIME
HAS PASSED. ■■■
HAVE SLUMBERED IN
THE NULL VOID FOR
MORE THAN SIXTY
CENTURIES

IN OUR
ABSENCE, THE
SEQUENCE NOBLES
OF THE SECRET
ORDER HAVE DONE
THEIR BEST
TO MAINTAIN OUR
OBJECTIVES



AND WHAT?
NOW YOU'RE
AWAKE? BACK ■
BUSINESS?

AND
DELIGHTED
TO FIND ■ STRONG
LEADER ON THE
THRONE OF
AERIE.

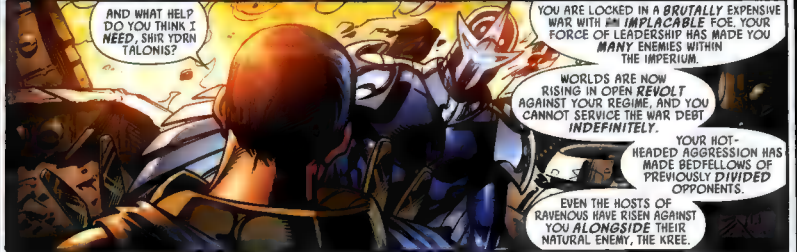
THE FRATERNITY
OF RAPTORS HAS
RETURNED TO SERVE
YOU, EMPEROR VULCAN.
TO SECURE YOUR
RULE.

TO TAKE
THE IMPERIUM
TO THE NEXT
LEVEL.



WE? I
SEE ONLY
ONE OF
YOU.

WE ARE
EVERYWHERE.



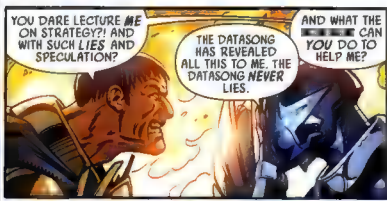
AND WHAT HELP
DO YOU THINK I
NEED, SHIR YDRN
TALONIS?

YOU ARE LOCKED IN A BRUTALLY EXPENSIVE
WAR WITH AN **IMPLACABLE** FOE. YOUR
FORCE OF LEADERSHIP HAS MADE YOU
MANY ENEMIES WITHIN
THE IMPERIUM.

WORLDS ARE NOW
RISING IN OPEN **REVOLT**
AGAINST YOUR REGIME, AND YOU
CANNOT SERVICE THE WAR DEBT
INDEFINITELY.

YOUR HOT-
HEADED AGGRESSION HAS
MADE BEDFELLOWS OF
PREVIOUSLY **DIVIDED**
OPPONENTS.

EVEN THE HOSTS OF
RAVENOUS HAVE RISEN AGAINST
YOU **ALONGSIDE** THEIR
NATURAL ENEMY, THE KREE.



YOU DARE LECTURE **ME**
ON STRATEGY?! AND
WITH SUCH **LIES** AND
SPECULATION?

THE DATASONG
HAS REVEALED
ALL THIS TO ME. THE
DATASONG NEVER
LIES.

AND WHAT THE
— CAN
YOU DO TO
HELP ME?



AS A GESTURE
OF OUR INTENT, AND A
DEMONSTRATION OF OUR ABILITIES,
THE FRATERNITY HAS STRUCK
A PACT WITH **KING BLASTAAR**
OF THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

I CAN SHARE
THE DATASONG
WITH YOU IF YOU
WOULD LIKE TO SEE...



...THERE. THEY
FALL UPON THE
CEDED TERRITORIES
FROM THE NEGATIVE ZONE
THROUGH PORTALS
MANUFACTURED BY THE
COSMIC ROD KING
BLASTAAR NOW
WIELDS.

RAVENOUS'S
ENCLAVE WILL
NOT LAST
ANOTHER
WEEK.



NOW TELL ME...HOW DO YOU INTEND TO DEAL WITH LILANDRA NERAMANI'S COUP ON CHANDILAR?

WHAT? WHAT?!



LIES! LIES! I WOULD HAVE HEARD SOMETHING IF SUCH **OUTRAGE** HAD OCCURRED!

THE INTELFEEED HAS BEEN **SABOTAGED** BY YOUR OPPONENTS, MAJESTOR.

BUT THE DATASONG IS BEYOND THEIR REACH. LILANDRA IS IN THE HIGH COUNCIL RIGHT **NOW**. DEMANDING YOUR CENSURE.



NO! NO!! I'LL NEVER GET BACK TO CHANDILAR IN TIME TO--

CALM YOURSELF, MAJESTOR.

I SAID I WOULD PROTECT YOU, AND I WILL.



THE CONCOURSE
OF THE ALDE
LILANDRA.

IN LESS THAN AN
HOUR, THE CITY
CENTER IS CHOKED
WITH SCREAMING
CROWDS.

BUT SOME ARE NOT REJOICING
PRO-VULCAN Mobs RIOT
IN THE STREETS AROUND
THE CHANCELLERY.

THAT'S WHEN
SHE DECIDES
TO WALK TO
THE TEMPLE.

THIS IS
A BAD
IDEA.

TO
CONSOLIDATE
MY CLAIM, I MUST GO
TO THE TEMPLE OF
SHARRA AND KYTHRI
AND RENEW
MY OATH.

THEN THE
COUNCIL AND THE
CHIEFS OF STAFF CAN
PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE
TO ME AT THE
HIGH ALTAR.

GRASP THE
RITUAL SIGNIFICANCE,
LILANDRA. IT'S THE "WALKING
ACROSS THE CONCOURSE
TO GET THERE" PART THAT
HAVOK IS HAVING
TROUBLE WITH.



I'M NOT
VULCAN,
LORNA.

I NEED TO
SHOW THE PEOPLE
THAT I'VE RETURNED, AND
THAT I'M ONE OF **THEM**.
I NEED TO WALK **AMONG**
THEM WITHOUT
FEAR.

THIS WILL
NOT STAND! YOU
HAVE WOEFULLY MISREAD
THE WILLINGNESS OF THE
SHI'AR TO ACCEPT **REGIME**
CHANGE IN A TIME
OF WAR!

AND YOU'VE
MISREAD MY
WILLINGNESS TO
LISTEN TO YOU
TALK CRAP.
ARAKI



RACHEL,
WHAT'S THE
SITUATION?

THE HEAD'S
SPINNING. SO
MANY MINDS PACKED
IN TIGHT. PROTESTERS
AND SUPPORTERS
ALIKE...

THE MENTAL
CHATTER IS
DEAFENING...
ANGER, JOY, FEAR,
CONFUSION...

THE
MAJESTRIX WILL
BE PERFECTLY SAFE.
SHE IS UNDER MY
PROTECTION.



HAVE I
MISJUDGED
THE PEOPLE.
KALLARK?

DO THEY
REALLY LOVE
VULCAN?

OF
COURSE NOT,
MAJESTRIX.

I TELL HER
NO, BUT I AM
DISMAYED.



I DIDN'T EXPECT
ANY POPULAR
DISSENT. I--

WHAT THE
HELL IS THIS?
MIST... OUT OF
NOWHERE?

IT'LL NOT
MIST! I MEAN,
IT'S NOT JUST
MIST! IT'S IN MY
MIND TOO!

OH MY
GOD, I'VE
FELT THIS
BEFORE!



THE DEATH
COMMANDOS.
CHANCELLOR ARAKI'S
COVERT NETWORK
SQUAD.

I CAN'T
BELIEVE HE'D
TRY SOMETHING
THIS BRAZEN.

THESE ARE
THE BASTARDS
WHO MURDERED
MY FAMILY!

RACHEL! GET
A GRIP! YOU'RE
NO GOOD TO US
WITH YOUR MIND
CLOUDED!

TAKE
KORVUS AND GET
LILANDRA INTO
COVER!

CALL
OFF YOUR
KILLERS!

I DIDN'T
CALL THEM
IN.
BUT I
APPLAUD
THEIR WORK.

GET THE
MAJESTRIX
TO COVER!

SKRWITCHS

AIGHH!

METAL
WINGS? TRY
AGAIN.

UNHAND
ME!
I AM YOUR
EMPRESS!

COME
ON!

I
CAN'T--

COME
ON!

HYPERNOVA FIRST.
SHE PLASMA-FRIES TWO
LOYAL COUNCILMEN
BEFORE I PUT
HER DOWN.

WARSHOT
NEXT.

BY THE TIME FLAW THE
WARSKRULL HITS ME, I CAN
HEAR ARAKI LAUGHING
AND SHOUTING
OVER THE TUMULT.

PANIC HAS SEIZED
THE CONCOURSE. A
HUNDRED THOUSAND
PEOPLE ARE CAUGHT
IN ITS GRIP.



